



Statement from Arthur Jensen, General Manager  
Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA)  
About the Proposal to Drain Hetch Hetchy Reservoir

Delivered at the Progress Briefing by California Department of Water Resource  
on July 14, 2005

Advocates for the plan to drain Hetch Hetchy reservoir or tear down the dam see it as a way to reverse a U.S. government decision of almost 100 years ago, which has provided vital water for Bay Area people and its economy, and recreate the Hetch Hetchy Valley.

BAWSCA and other organizations, who represent the water interests of 1.7 million residents, large and small businesses, schools, hospitals, senior centers, and other community organizations, see a plan that poses huge risks to safety, health and economic well being of the people and enormous costs for taxpayers.

Elected policy makers in Sacramento and Washington, DC will ultimately decide the fate of this proposal, and their first priority must be to protect the health and safety of the people, the economy, and the community institutions in the Bay Area's four counties that depend on Hetch Hetchy water. They must also decide if this is the wisest use of California's and the nation's limited financial resources, when there are so many other pressing environmental and infrastructure needs.

BAWSCA's position is that elected policy makers must address five major requirements with facts before any responsible decision can be made. BAWSCA will oppose any proposal to drain Hetch Hetchy Reservoir unless these requirements are met and the Bay Area people are protected, the economy is supported, and the communities are satisfied.

The requirements are:

1. No delay in rebuilding the earthquake-vulnerable Hetch Hetchy system caused by a program to drain the reservoir or destroy the dam.
2. No change in the quality of water delivered to San Francisco's customers.
3. No increase in the cost of water for San Francisco's customers. Any increased capital, operating, maintenance and administrative costs resulting from draining or destroying the dam should not be borne by the existing or future water customers of the system through their water bills.
4. No change in physical facilities or institutional arrangements should reduce water supplies or expose existing and future water customers to more frequent or severe water shortages.
5. No modifications to the existing water system or its operation until all replacement facilities are funded, built and operational, and all institutional arrangements are in place, and fully funded.